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He's Much to

H U S H M O N E Y .

A C O M I C D R A M A , I N T W O A C T S .

BY GEORGE DANCE, ESQ.



Dramatis Personæ.

See page 10.

As performed by the Olympic Company of Comedians, before Her Majesty at Windsor Castle, 1860.

MR. JASPER TOUCHWOOD, a sensitive Gentleman	Mr. F. Robson.
SNUGGLE, a retired Tradesman	Mr. Addison.
CHARLES WHITE, his Nephew	Mr. Leslie.
STOCK, a Chelsea Pensioner	Mr. G. Cooke.
SNOREM, a Watchman	Mr. H. Cooper.

TOM TILLER, a Waterman	Mr. S. Emery.
LYDIA, Daughter to Snuggle	Miss Marston.
MRS. CRAB	Mrs. Stevens.
SALLY, a Laundress, Daughter to Stock	Mrs. A. Wigan.

No. 330. Dicks' Standard Plays.

C O S T U M E.

TOUCHWOOD.—1st dress: Large blue camlet cloak, and outre travelling cap. 2nd dress: Full mourning, drab hat, large crape hatband.

SNUGGLE.—Old gentleman's plain brown suit, white stockings, shoes.

CHARLES.—Young gentleman's fashionable coat, waistcoat, and trousers.

STOCK.—Chelsea pensioner's dress and hat, black stock, knee and shoe buckles

SNOREM.—Watchman's grey coat, Welsh nightcap, large brimmed hat.

TOM TILLER.—Thames waterman's suit, with glazed hat. 2nd dress: Plain old fashioned grey livery coat, red waistcoat, green breeches.

LYDIA.—Young lady's white dress.

SALLY.—1st dress: Plain coloured gown and an apron. 2nd dress: Pretty light-coloured gown.

MRS. CRAB.—Red gown and shawl, cap and bonnet.

S T A G E D I R E C T I O N S.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R.

RC.

C.

LC.

L.

. The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

HUSH MONEY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The interior of Sally's dwelling. SALLY is discovered employed in ironing different articles of ladies' dress. STOCK is seated at the fire on the opposite side, with a tankard before him, and a pipe in his mouth.*

Stock. (R. H.) Well, Sally! after all's said and done, you are to do as you think fit.

Sally. (L.) In course I am. I know that as well as you can tell me.

Stock. Still you ought not to be too quick in what you do.

Sally. No more I am, for as sure as I takes anything in hand, I turn it over and over and over, and look at it first this way, and then that way, and as I may say every way, before ever I can make up my mind what's best to be done with it. (Turning and folding her work as she speaks.) But still, "strike while the iron's hot" is a good motto.

Stock. Ay, child, but "slow and sure's" a better.

Sally. So you think, father.

Stock. You only listen to me and you'll never burn your fingers.

Sally. (Pettishly, and with violence taking hold of the iron, from which the handle has slipped, she burns herself.) Psha, nonsense, ah! ah! I've burnt 'em now, however, that comes of your "slow and sure." (Running towards the side.)

Stock. No, no, girl! that comes o' your striking while the "iron's hot."

(Mrs. Crab opens the window gently, and puts in her head.)

Mrs. C. (Aside.) So, so, there she is, but I don't see Tom.

Stock. Come, before I go home, let's say a word or two about this business of your'n with honest Tom Tiller.

Mrs. C. (Aside.) They're talking of him, however; so I shall make bold to listen.

Stock. You know, Tom has been here a courting of you for a good twelvemonth or more.

Sally. Well, I can't help that, I've as good as told him to his face, ay, a dozen times, that he is a plaguy deal more free than welcome.

Stock. But you know you gave him encouragement enough at first.

Sally. Suppose I did, I'm sure I've more than made up for it since.

Stock. That has been only since you got hold of this Mr. Touchwood. Ah, Sally, that's a sort of acquaintance as I don't precisely see the end on, and I only wish good may come of it.

Sally. Well, there, father, we are agreed, however, for that's just what I wish, and what's more I think it will.

Stock. (Shaking his head.) You have never told me what this Mr. Touchwood is.

Sally. Why, in the first place he's a gentleman, and Tom, you know, is anything but—then he has, as near as I can make out, pretty near two hundred a year, and poor Tom is in right earnest, poor Tom; and last of all, he's a tall, grand-looking man, and Tom is such a very little fellow, that when he walks out by the side of me on a Sunday, the folks do stare at us with their eyes. (Imitating their walking together.) Besides, you know, father, a woman's in duty bound to do the best she can for herself.

Mrs. C. (Aside.) True, Mistress Sally, and so I'll just see what I can do for myself, with what I've just learned. (Shuts the window, and disappears.)

Stock. How did your acquaintance begin with this fine gentleman?

Sally. Oh, as to that, it began, as I may say, quite promiscuously, in the streets, where you must know I saw him hustled by a gang of ill-looking fellows, pick-pockets; however, my eye was on 'em, and I saved his watch for him, which they had just twitched out of his fob.

Stock. The rascals! I wish I had been there.

Sally. In course you know there was a pretty row, but the police coming up the thing was soon set to rights; but law, if you had but a seed Mr. Touchwood, he was in such a pucker that he couldn't hardly utter a word! The moment they mentioned prosecution, and making us both appear again 'em, he was as white as a sheet, and said, "I only beg that you'll let her go, and let them go, and let me go, that's all I ask!" and I verily believe if they hadn't he'd have been taken ill in the very street, he is so very nervous and timorous.

Stock. Indeed! and so this was the way you first came acquainted with him.

Sally. Yes, that and no other, for the very next day he called to thank me, and wasn't at all proud, but sat down as you might do, and we chatted together about this and that and t'other, 'till we became the very best o' friends, and he used to tell me that he had often thought of taking a wife, but that somehow or other he was quite dashed by all the females in his line of life, and that, above all, when once another man started up as a rival like, he was done for from that moment, and so of course you know, I've always been as soft as silk with him, and above all, I've took precious good care to keep Tom out of sight.

Stock. Ah, that's all well, but in the mean time I can tell you of one who takes precious good care to keep him in sight.

Sally. What, Mrs. Crab, as is cook at the Red House at Batterssea?

Stock. The same.

Sally. And a nice sour apple she is as any one need wish to have a bite at; why, the very sound of her voice is always enough to set my teeth on edge.

Stock. Ah, very likely; but she'll get Tom away from you in spite of your teeth.

Sally. Will she? ah, well, you never mind about that, father, you leave me to take care of myself in that quarter. And now I don't want to turn you out, but hadn't you better be thinking of getting home again? you know the last time you were here the gates were shut, and you got into trouble.

Stock. Well light me another pipe, and I'll begone; but I wonder Tom a'n't here, for he promised to come before this, and put me across the river in his boat.

Sally. Indeed! (*aside*) but that won't do, I can't have him bothering here to-night. (*Aloud.*) Oh father, I wouldn't stay for Tom, if I was you; you know he's a terrible bad'un to keep an appointment.

Stock. Not always child, (*knocking at the door*) for here he is. I'm so glad! for I do of all things like to see a good-natured face. (*Sally opens the door.*)

Enter MRS. CRAB.

Sally. (*Seeing her.*) Do you? then I hope as you are accommodated.

Mrs. C. If you mean me, ma'am, you needn't hope no such a thing. I don't happen to stand in need of accommodation, and if I did, you are about the last as I should demean myself by coming to for it.

Sally. Well, father. I do agree with you that it does one all the good in the world only to have a look at that sweet face. (*Aside.*) Just like a monkey took suddenly ill.

Mrs. C. Sweet or not, ma'am, my face is not going to make sauce for anybody else's pudding head, so take that.

Stock. Come, Mrs. Crab, I don't mean to be rude, but perhaps you are going my road, if so I shall be glad of the pleasure of your company; we live pretty nearly opposite one another, you know.

Mrs. C. No, Mr. Stock, I don't know no such thing. Because, as it happens, I have quitted the public line, and accepted a cook's place in a private capacity, in the house of one Mr. Snuggle, as lives not a great way from here—a vastly genteel family!

Sally. Particularly genteel! and it'll doubtless become much more so, now that it has the advantage of Mrs. Crab to give it a lift.

Mrs. C. You know the family, ma'am?

Sally. Yes, I know the family, ma'am; I have been a long time employed there, in the private capacity of laundress and clear starcher—may I venture to hope for Mrs. Crab's patronage and support?

Mrs. C. That, ma'am, will depend entirely on how you deport yourself. In the mean time I beg to say that I did not come here to handy words with such as you, but to look for Mr. Tiller.

Sally. Mr. Tiller?

Mrs. C. Yes, ma'am, the same. Having occasion to speak to him on business, and not finding him at home, I took the liberty of dropping in here, seeing that I very well know as he spends a good deal, ay, and I may say too much of his time here, more indeed than I and his real friends incline to think will ever turn out either to his credit or advantage.

Sally. So, ma'am, that's your opinion, is it?

Mrs. C. Yes, ma'am, it is, and moreover it's one as I shall give Mr. Tiller himself the very first time I come across him, and before many hours are over your head I'll let you know something.

Sally. La, well, I shall be clever, I reckon,

whenever Mrs. Crab lets me know anything—ha! ha!

Mrs. C. They laughs best as laughs longest, but take you care Mrs. Sauce-box, that your's don't end on the wrong side of your face. It might hurt your beauty.

Sally. How pleasant for you to be quite free from any fear on that score.

Mrs. C. It's like your impudence to say such a thing! but I've done with you; but before I go allow me to leave a message for Mr. Tiller; don't be alarmed, nor fly into a jealous fit. It's only to request that if he can by any means tear himself away from your society, he'll be good enough to wait on Mr. Charles White, at Mr. Snuggle's villa, to-morrow morning, when he will find him and other friends ready to receive him, and to console him as much as possible for your absence; and for your precious self, I should just wish, before I take my departure, to add my strongest possible assurance that you have my despise!

[*Exit, through door.*]

Sally. Ditto, ditto, to the end of the chapter! (*Calling after her.*) Oh, wouldn't she be a pleasant lodger in a small house?

Stock. Sally, Sally! you are incorrigible; but good-night, girl; and I'll go and look after Tom myself. Good-bye.

[*Exit through door.*]

Sally. Good-bye, father—well I'm glad they're gone, for it's getting on for the time of my appointment with Mr. Touchwood. But let's have one more look at his letter, that there may be no mistake. (*Takes letter from her pocket, and reads.*) "returned to town"—"something very particular to say to you"—yes, I shouldn't wonder if I knew what—"Bishop's walk, from twelve to half-past." Droll of him to choose such a time and such a place, but there, he is so shy and frightened like he never does anything like anybody else. Anyway it isn't for me to balk him, leastways not till such time as I've tied him up with a hymeneal halter, then if Mrs. Crab and Mr. Tiller behaves themselves, I won't say I won't make one my cook and the other my footman.

[*Exit through door.*]

SCENE II.—Outside of Tom Tiller's house.

Enter TOM TILLER, with a pair of sculls on his shoulder, and singing.

*In Chester town a man there dwelt,
Not rich as Cræsus, but a buck—
The pangs of love he clearly felt,
His name was Thomas Clutterbuck.
The lady he did most approve,
Of guineas gold had got 'em,
So Thomas he fell deep in love,
With Polly Higginbottom.
Oh, Thomas Clutterbuck, &c.*

It's one of the strangest things in life to me as folks should find it in their hearts to laugh when they hears that song. To my mind it's one of the most affectingest ditties as ever I heard—many and many's the time I've catched myself a whimpering and a snivelling over it, like a hinfant in arms, and when once that 'ere tune gets what I call the grip o' me, I could go on a singing and a singing it, 'till I get as mopy and melancholy as if the Thames was froze over! and for the matter o' that, it might as well be, if I am to do no better than

I'm doing now. Ever since this blessed morning I wish I may drown if I've earned bread and cheese. Oh, you know it can't last—the folks all seem like so many cats, afraid of coming near the water; howsoever watermen are like other people, they must eat, and they will drink—they cannot live upon hair.

Enter STOCK, L. H.

Stock. To be sure they can't, Mr. Tom; you never spoke a truer word than that.

Tom. Hollo, old chap, it's rather late for you to be out of bounds.

Stock. Yes, I'm none too early I know; but thought on my way home I'd just look in upon you a moment to give you a message.

Tom. A message for me? what from my dear Sally?

Stock. Why, no, not exactly, Mrs. Crab gave it to me.

Tom. Did she? then I tell you what, you just give it back again to her, and tell her it don't fit.

Stock. But don't you wish—

Tom. No, I don't, I tell you—I don't wish nothing where she is concerned.

Stock. And I tell you, you are too hasty—slow and sure, my boy, is best.

Tom. No, no; there an't no best nor worst neither, when Mother Crab has a hand in it, because it's all bad alike; and I've told her half a hundred times she is not the right fare for my boat. Besides, you know, an't I as good as spliced already to your Sally.

Stock. I wish you was.

Tom. Well, for that matter, so do I; but, hullo, you look as glum all of a sudden as if you'd found a shilling and lost eighteen pence.—I say, old fellow, there an't a screw loose nowhere, is there?

Stock. No, no, I don't say that, but only let me tell you that Mrs. Crab—

Tom. Now I tell you it's no use your going on about Mother Crab, because I won't have her at a gift.

Stock. Very good, but you must have her message, for that comes from Mr. Charles White, who I understand is your friend.

Tom. Oh! if 'tis from Master Charley, as I call him, that's another guess kind of a thing—That's the best friend I ever had to my back—many's the good job he's helped me to ashore, when there's been nothing a doing on the river, and whenever I hear his name there's a sort of a kind of a dusty feeling like comes all about my precious throat, and I don't feel I've ever properly got shoot of it, 'till I have had a glass of something or other and water to drink his health in; so now I say, old chap, let's you and I just step together across the way, to the Jolly Waterman, and over one glass—no more you know—not a drop more, you shall tell me what all this is about.

Stock. That's all very well for you, but I've got long march yet before me, and so I can't do it.

Tom. Can't you! try, and I think you'll find you can; and as to your long march, why I'll shorten that a good mile or two, by putting you over in my boat; so no more about that, nor about Mother Crab, for her very name is enough to turn all the milk in the house sour; and as I've said to her more than once, when she's a doing her pickles, hang me if she wouldn't save her master a fortune

in vinegar, if she was only to look once a day into the jar.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—Entrance to the Terrace in front of Lambeth Palace. On one side part of the building itself, on the other, river in the distance, lights on Westminster-bridge, the Speaker's House, &c., &c. Moonlight.

Enter TOUCHWOOD, R. H., wrapped in his cloak; he paces up and down without speaking, 'till the clock strikes the three-quarters.

Touch. So, another quarter gone, and no Sally. Upon my life this is a vastly agreeable way of passing one's time between twelve and one in the morning; not that it's the least use my complaining, because if she chooses to keep me here 'till sunrise, stay I must—confound the wind! how it blows again. I tell you what, Mrs. Sally, when you do come, you shall find me as cold to you as the night is to me. Oh, yes, I shall cut the matter very short; it was all very well, when I had a paltry two hundred pounds a year, to talk of marrying one in that line of life, but now that by a lucky windfall I have tumbled into four times that, the thing would be ridiculous. No, no, my dear Lydia is now my object, and so the moment Mrs. Sally makes her appearance, I shall acquaint her with a few facts that will astonish her weak mind—poor creature, it's hard, I own it, but what can I do? I am sure if anybody will tell me, I am quite ready to listen to reason.

Enter SALLY (R. H.) also muffled up.

Sally. Well, dang it! I'm glad to hear that, main glad, my dear Mr. Touchwood, because in that case it's for certain you'll not refuse to listen to me, while I tell you how it comes to pass that I be so shocking late; but lawks! I am so delighted to see your nice old phiz again.

(Putting her hands to his face.)

Touch. Loss freedom, Mrs. Sally, if you please; too much familiarity breeds contempt.

Sally. Why, how changed your manner is!

Touch. Really?

Sally. Yes, really. (Touchwood expressing annoyance.) But I know well enough what that cross look of your'n means, and I beg your pardon, for not pronouncing my words as you tell me to do, but I don't know how it is, somehow or other, it do seem as if the more I try, the more I don't succeed; and yet it is not for want of good-will, neither, because, as I says to myself, Sally, says I, "when Mr. Touchwood demeans himself for to make you his lawful wife—"

Touch. (Coughing.) Ahem! how very cold it is!

Sally. Why, yes, for certain, it's none of the warmest, but as I was saying, when once we are married—

Touch. (Coughing more violently.) Ahem! ahem! really this north-east wind cuts like a knife.

Sally. Ay, that it does, it cuts and comes again.

Touch. (Aside.) Elegant observation! (Aloud.) But, Mrs. Sally, it's getting very late, so let me without any further delay come to the subject matter on which I summoned you here to speak.

HUSH MONEY.

Sally. Well, what is it—out with it at once!

Touch. Be patient, and I will—out with it at once! you are aware that I have been absent from London for upwards of a month.

Sally. Ay, down at Margate to have a dip in the sea, and by the same token you told me that by the next time you went there we should be Mr. and Mrs. Touchwood, and then we'd go and have our dip together.

Touch. Together? Really, Mrs. Sally—

Sally. Well, there you go again, with your cross looks, and all because I said I should like to rollick and flounder about in the sea—and so I should, and I meant no harm.

Touch. I dare say not, but at the same time a little more care in your expressions, and you would not so often flounder in them.

Sally. Ha! ha! come, that's good again—Lord, how I do like to look at that droll face of yours when you say them things.

Touch. Indeed! upon my word, I'm much obliged to you; but I don't happen to consider my face as at all droll.

Sally. Ah! but I do; droll enough to belong to the Funny Club; but you know you said—

Touch. (Quickly.) Whatever I may have said, or whatever prospects I may have held out to you, before my last quitting you, circumstances of considerable importance which have since occurred make it necessary that I should now tell you you must consider those prospects at an end. (Aside.) Ahem! that, I think, will give her some notion of what she has to expect.

Sally. (After a pause.) What do you say?

Touch. I say what I mean.

Sally. And what do you mean?

Touch. Just what I say.

Sally. And more shame for you, when you say such an unfeeling speech! but you have given me your promise, and I'll keep you to it, or you shall pay for it.

Touch. Why, as to paying, I have no precise memorandum of having on any occasion been guilty of giving any promise before a witness, and, therefore—

Sally. And, therefore, you hold yourself free to act like a deceitful—do so, sir, but if you think that by so doing you can break my heart, you never were more mistook in your life, for as to being your wife I don't value it at that (snapping her fingers); and as to crying and making myself miserable about you, I am much more likely to laugh in your face. Ha! ha! ha! that's what I am, and I'll do it again—ha! ha! for I think it nothing but a joke, a ca-pi-tal—o—oh! oh! oh! (Crying.)

Touch. (Aside.) If she cries I'm done for. (Approaching her.) Nay, Mrs. Sally!—

Sally. Stand off, I say, how dare you go for to touch me after such ow-dacious goings on?

Touch. Sally, Mrs. Sally, I say, this is really evincing a violence of manner that quite astonishes me.

Sally. I dare say it does, particularly in one as you thought it impossible to pervoke, but the worm will turn when it's trod upon.

Touch. Trod on! Mrs. Sally, I protest I have no wish to tread on you.

Sally. Yes you have—but, like the worm, I'll turn on you. There, I'm not going to cry any more about such a—but you just mark my words, there's some fine madam at the bottom of all this, I know there is; but leave me alone to find her out,

and when you are married, dead or alive, I'll be as good as a ghost to her and you, too.

(The clock strikes one.)

Touch. Ha!

Sally. Yes, you may well say ha!

Touch. Mrs. Sally, be so good as not to mention anything about death or ghosts, you know how nervous those subjects make me.

Sally. Oh, nonsense about nervous—do you see that river?

Touch. What do you mean?

Sally. (Aside.) I'll try what frightening him a bit will do. (Aloud.) I'm as likely as not to jump into that river, and be found a drowned corpse in the morning.

Touch. Mrs. Sally, for shame; does your conscience say nothing against this? Do you hear no voice that terrifies you?

(Tom Tiller is heard singing.)

"Oh, Polly Higginbottom!

Down she went unto the bottom."

Sally. I do, indeed, and it's a voice that terrifies me out of my life.

Touch. Your life?

Sally. Ay, my life. (Aside.) It's Tom, and I wouldn't have him see me here for the world, so I must be quick—if he finds us together he'll be jealous, and I shall lose both, and so listen, you deceitful—listen to my last words!

Touch. (Aside.) Her last words! What can she mean? Sally, Mrs. Sally, I say, I'm in such a state—my head is turning—my eyes are swimming!

Sally. Oh, don't talk of swimming, for if once I makes a plunge it isn't that as'll save me.

(Tom Tiller's voice is heard nearer.)

"I sing the ghost, the watery ghost,
Of pretty Polly Higginbottom!"

Touch. (Leaning against the railing.) Oh!

Sally. (Aside.) He's here, and go I must. (Moving towards the opposite side to that one which Tom Tiller's voice is heard—the Watchman cries "Past one o'clock.") The watchman! I haven't let him see me—gad, then there's no other way to escape,—no matter if I do frighten him, serve him right, the water's only up to my knees, and I can creep along under the bank. (Going up to Touchwood.) Now, wretch, this is what you have driven me to, and now I'm gone for ever!

(Runs to the railing, stoops under it, and jumps down. Touchwood runs to stop her, but is too late; he falls upon the railing.)

Touch. Forbear! Ah, gone for ever!

(At that moment enter TOM TILLER, who hears the last words.)

Tom. A man going to drown himself! (Running and catching hold of him by the coat.) Not while I have strength to hold you.

Touch. Let me go! let me go!

Tom. Not I, indeed; an't you ashamed of yourself to think to commit such a crime?

Touch. Crime?

Tom. Ay, crime! don't you call drowning a crime?

Touch. Of course, but as I live I didn't—

Tom. Psha! didn't I see you—

Touch. (Aside.) As sure as fate he thinks 'twas I who plung'd her in. (Aloud.) What can I say? What can I do?

Tom. Nothing; you know you are guilty, and ought to be glad that I was here to arrest you.

Touch. (With great force.) Arrest me? I am a ruined man!

Tom. But ruination ten times over an't no excuse for such a deed as that. For my part, I'm as poor as Job.

Touch. (Aside.) Ha! he may be bribed. Poor, are you?

Tom. Ah, that I am, sometimes what I call dreadfully pressed.

Touch. (Aside.) I wish to my soul you were now, and sent on board the tender.

Tom. But no matter for being poor, I'm not one of those as thinks the human life of man is to be sacrificed that way.

Touch. Hush! here, take this.

(Gives him money.)

Tom. Gold! well, if you'll promise me not to be trying again—

Touch. I'll promise anything.

Tom. There, then (loosening him), but mind, I've a sharp eye on you. (Watchman's voice is heard, "Past one o'clock.") Oh, there's the watchman—come, I'm glad of that.

Touch. (Alarmed.) Glad, why?

Tom. Because he'll help me to look after you till we get a coach.

Touch. Do you wish me to be driven to distraction?

Tom. No, bless you, I only wish you to be driven to where you'll be taken proper care of.

Touch. Hear me. Let the watchman pass quietly, and name your own reward.

Tom. Oh! what, he's caught you at these rigs afore, has he?

Enter SNOREM.

Snore. Past one o'clock! (Seeing them.) Now, I say, good people, don't you know as it's rather late to be on the prowl here? Is there anything amiss?

Touch. (Aside to Tiller.) Speak to him.

Tom. I will. How are you, watchee?

Snore. What's that you, Master Thomas? Oh, then it's all right.

Tom. To be sure, so good night, Master Snorem.

Snore. Good night. Past one o'clock!

Tom. (To Touchwood.) There, you see it's all right. Come along, I'll see you safe.

Touch. (Aside.) Safe! what a frightful sound that word has in his mouth!

Snore. Past one o'clock!

[Exit severally.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II*.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Snuggle's House.

D. in F.

Enter SNUGGLE, R. H. followed by LYDIA.

Snug. Now don't, my little darling, do not be for ever coming across me and my wishes, as was

* This Act is generally played in one Scene (a house and garden grounds). See Scene II.

the custom with your late mother, of blessed memory.

Lyd. You know you always say that I am to take my mother's place.

Snug. Yes, child, but it was not your mother's place to contradict me, although she so often did it.

Lyd. And yet you continually tell me to make her conduct my rule.

Snug. Perhaps I do, but there is no rule without an exception; you know the one maxim of my life is, let us be cozy and comfortable, and you, I am sure, might be truly so, if you would only get into the way of yielding to my wishes.

Lyd. And of never consulting my own.

Snug. I don't say that, I don't say that, at all, on the contrary, consult your own as much as you like, but follow mine. It's very hard, upon my life it is, that I am to be thwarted in an affair of such importance.

Lyd. But I should think I ought—

Snug. Psha, in business ought stands for nothing. Now, you listen to me: Mr. Touchwood has my promise, and I must keep it.

Lyd. That is what I wish you to do, sir, but your promise was given to your nephew, Charles.

Snug. Aye, but that was before I knew Mr. Touchwood, whose fortune makes him so desirable a match for you.

Lyd. And Charles, sir—

Snug. Oh, you do as I desire—and I'll care of Charles; you know he is a handsome young fellow, that is agreeable enough; now if I could get him, as I don't know but I can, in our County Yeomanry—the dog can ride, can't he?

Lyd. (Eagerly.) Oh, beautifully, sir!

Snug. Well, you know, some, rich citizen's daughter may fall in love with him.

Lyd. Sir!

Snug. And then if she should have a fond, foolish old father, as you have, why they can be married, and live as cozy and comfortable as—as you and Mr. Touchwood.

Lyd. (Sighing.) I should think so, sir.

Snug. But come, I've hundred things to do: Mr. Touchwood is to be here this morning, to pay you his first formal visit as your suitor; and we must make some little extra exertion to entertain him. I suppose you have hired a man, as I desired, to come and help do what's wanting—what do you call him?

Lyd. Oh, that young man! His name, sir, is—Tiller—Thomas Tiller—and I know he is a proper person, because he was recommended by my cousin Charles.

Snug. Thomas Tiller. I don't remember ever hearing that name before. Tiller? Tiller? pray what is he?

Lyd. (Abstractedly.) In the County Yeomanry?

Snug. Bless the girl, she is fast asleep; however I won't stay longer to disturb her dreams. I am too happy myself to do that to anyone. Dear me, I don't know when I have felt so cozy and comfortable.

[Exit L. H.]

Lyd. And so end all my hopes of being a happy wife, for as sure as I marry Mr. Touchwood, I feel beforehand I shall pass all my days in sighing, and all nights in crying. (Knocking at the door.) Who's there?

Sally. (Without.) If you please, are you here, miss!

Lyd. Who is it that asks?

Sally. (*Opening the door.*) It's only I miss, Sally Stock!

Lyd. You, Sally, what brought you here?

Sally. (*Entering.*) The things from the wash, or rather, I should say I brought them, but it's all one you know, miss; and now that I am here, I have such a favour to ask of you, if you please.

Lyd. Well, what is it, Sally?

Sally. Why, it's this. You see miss, I know what fine doings be going on here, and to-day there may be a little helping hand wanted, and as I'm rather lonesome and melancholy like, on account of somewhat as happened last night, why I hope you'll give me leave for to stay, and I warrant I'll make myself useful in a good many ways. Law bless ye, I am one of those as can turn their hands to anything, at a pinch, and you shall see if I don't work like a good un. (*Aside.*) I hope she won't say no, for now that I've lost my rich lover, I must look twice as sharp after my poor one.

Lyd. Oh, Sally! you may stay, and welcome.

Sally. Thank ye, miss, a thousand times; and I'll only just run home, and shut up my bit of a cabin, and put the key in my pocket, because you know, miss, the less one has, the less one can afford to lose; but, lawk miss, what is it do make you look so cloudy? But never mind, you only stop till your cousin comes, he'll soon set you to rights, I warrant him.

Lyd. My cousin!

Sally. Aye, your cousin that is, and your husband that is to be.

Lyd. Sally, you are much mistaken, (*sighing.*) I am not to marry my cousin.

Sally. Not to marry your cousin? here's a pretty commence—and for why I should like to know.

Lyd. Because my father has changed his mind.

Sally. Changed his mind, indeed; but he hasn't a right to do no such thing. Why, lord, what an old—but I beg pardon, miss, to be sure it's a great freedom to talk so. But law bless me, only to think! well, I say nothing, but this I will say, 'tis the burningest shame.

Lyd. Hush, Sally! I am doomed to be the wife of Mr. Touchwood.

Sally. Mr. who, miss?

Lyd. Mr. Touchwood, do you know him?

Sally. Know him, miss! why, yes, miss, that is, no, miss, as I may say; I do know him, and don't know him. (*Aside.*) Oh, dear! it's come on me so sudden, that I declare it's made me feel all over in a twitter.

Lyd. Well, Sally, can you make up your mind whether you know Mr. Touchwood or not?

Sally. (*Aside.*) I see how it is; I must swear I don't. Oh, yes, miss! the fact is, I once knew a Mr. Touchwood, but I should hardly think it's the same.

Lyd. Oh, it may be; what sort of a person was he you knew?

Sally. (*Aside.*) Now for a fib. Ahem! (*Aloud.*) A little short fat gentleman.

Lyd. Short and fat?

Sally. Yes, miss, and with a swivel eye, with which he looks so.

(*Imitating.*)

Lyd. Oh, dear, then, it's decidedly not the same, some cousin, most likely.

Sally. Yes, miss, I should think so. (*Aside.*) He consined me, I know. But here comes your cousin, miss.

Enter CHARLES, L. H.

Char. Lydia, my own Lydia!

Sally. Your own Lydia! she ain't no such a thing! She's somebody else's Lydia.

Char. Somebody else's?

Lyd. Yes, Charles.

Char. You are not serious.

Sally. If she is not she ought to be. She's going to be married, sir.

Char. You married? And pray what is to become of me?

Lyd. Oh, you are to go into the Yeomanry.

Char. The what?

Lyd. The County Yeomanry.

Char. And what the devil am I to do there?

Sally. Why, of course, you are to strut and prance about on your fine horse, till such times as you catch the eye of some rich heiress.

Char. And what then?

Sally. Oh, then you are to marry her, and, like the folks in the story-books, you are to live happy ever afterwards.

Lyd. Yes sir, as happy as—as—I and my husband.

Char. Do you mean to say, then, that you shall be happy?

Sally. She looks as if she would, don't she. Why, law, how can you ask such a question?

Lyd. Oh, I don't know, nor I don't care, whether I am happy or not, for since you, Mr. Charles, can take it so very coolly, and never offer to do the least thing—

Char. Crnel fortune! what can I do?

Sally. (*Aside.*) I can't hold my tongue any longer. What can you do? why, not stand twiddling your thumbs for an hour, but, if you are her sweet heart, do prove it, by acting as such.

Char. (*Running to Lydia.*) That I will, in a moment.

Sally. (*Stopping him.*) Oh, that's all very well, so far as she is concerned, but it's no proof to others, at least none that'll do one morsel of good. Oh, if I was a man, wouldn't I do something? that I would. I'd stamp, and storm, and swear, and I'd go to my sweetheart, and I'd say, "You false, perfidious wretch, you! you go for to talk of marrying another? what do you mean? you can't do it"—Then to her father I'd say,—"You horrid old brute, would you break your word? you shan't do it."—And to the fellow that was going to marry her, I'd say,—"You take her away from me? you dare not do it, sir! No, sir, you daren't! Damme, sir!"

Lyd. Sally!

Sally. Mind, I only say that's what I'd say if I was a man; of course, as it is, I wouldn't let such a word escape my lips for ever so much.

Lyd. Or if you did, you see, it would have no effect.

Char. Yes, it would, consin, because it has already had the effect of rousing me, and you shall soon see that, although the measures I take may be less violent, they shall be no less efficacious.

Sally. That's your sort! now you talk as you ought. Yes, only stick to that, and you'll do.

Snug. (*Without, L. H.*) Lydia! Lydia! where are you?

Char. Here comes your father.

Sally. Then I'd better make myself scarce, but, before I go, mind once more, if you flinch, you're

done for; so pluck up a spirit, and give it him as he deserves:

[Exit Sally, D. in F.]

Char. Fear me not.

Enter SNUGGLE, L. H.

Snug. Now, Lydia, my love, call up your best looks, and your most winning smile; Mr. Touchwood is arrived. (*Seeing Charles.*) So, Mr. Charles, you have been talking with your cousin, have you! A word in your ear, if your please; what have you been saying to her? Hold your tongue, sir, I won't be answered; but mind this, whatever it was, it's my positive order that you never say it again.

Charles, Sir, I—

Snug. Not a word, sir, I tell you I won't hear it, and that's enough. (*Seeing Touchwood.*) Aha, my dear Mr. Touchwood! delighted to see you!

Enter MR. TOUCHWOOD, L. H., dressed in black, and looking pale.

And so is my daughter, here, though she don't say so.

Touch. I thank you, and I thank you, too, miss, (*sighing*) you are very good, both of you.

Snug. Not at all, not at all; but, hey dey! my good friend! has anything happened?

Touch. Happened!

Snug. Aye, to make you look so queer, for, by Jove, I can't say you appear to me to be at all what I call cozy and comfortable—may be you ain't well?

Touch. Oh, yes, I am—that is, I am not—I am not quite well.

Snug. Ah, the fatigue of your late journey, I dare say.

Touch. Perhaps so.

Snug. Though, now I remember, it couldn't be called a journey, either, for I think you said you came by the river.

Touch. (*Startling.*) The river! (*Recovering himself.*) True, yes, I believe I did.

Snug. Charming voyage that, by the steamer, up from Margate, so safe too, no danger of anyone being drowned.

Touch. (*More agitated.*) Drown'd! who says anyone was drown'd?

Snug. Bless my soul, why, nobody; but, if they had, why should that agitate you? they wouldn't, I suppose, say that you pushed them in.

Touch. (*In great agitation.*) I push them in? What do you mean, sir, by such a supposition?

Snug. Mr. Touchwood, you alarm me, what can ail you? I am sure I said nothing—

Touch. (*Recovering.*) No, no, of course you have not, I know that very well, but the fact is my nerves are just now very much shaken, and a dreadful occurrence, only last night—that I heard of—

Snug. Last night!

Touch. No, not last night, a week ago, or a fortnight, it might be. You hav'n't heard anything that happened last night, have you? that is nothing particular?

Snug. Not I indeed. (*To Lydia.*) Lyddy, my love, have you?

Lyd. No, sir, nothing that I remember.

Snug. Let me see, there was a crowd passed the door this morning.

Char. Oh, that was only a man they were taking to the police office—a waterman.

Touch. A what?

Char. A waterman, charged with extorting from a gentleman.

Touch. (*Much moved.*) Money, sir?

Char. Yes, to the amount of treble his fare.

Touch. Oh, was that all?

Snug. And quite enough too, I should think.

Touch. (*Recollecting himself.*) Enough, eh? to be sure, and too much, I should say; but the truth is, they are a depraved set, those Thames watermen, I never knew an honest one yet.

Char. Indeed, sir, then you must have been peculiarly unlucky in your acquaintance with them.

Touch. (*Aside.*) I have, indeed.

Snug. Aye, aye, that's all very likely; but come, you don't look the thing, at all. Suppose now, as we dine rather late, you were to have a little something by way of a snack.

Touch. Just as you please, sir, just as you please. Snug. Come, that's right; now Lyddy, my love, see that the tray is brought in directly, and then get ready! there's a good girl, to go out a little way with me.

Lyd. Yes, sir, (*aside*) and thank you too for the deliverance.

[Exit.]

(*Touchwood draws a chair and sits down.*)

Snug. And do you, Charles, go to my lawyer, Mr. Clipper, and beg him to step here, in about an hour.

Char. Will you not allow me first to have a little conversation with you?

Snug. Yes, that is, upon any subject but one.

Char. And upon what?

Snug. I won't hear a word, so away with you: (*putting him out*) that's the way to dispose of you.

[Exit Charles, L. H.]

Enter TILLER, R. D. F., with an old livery put over his plush breeches, and carrying a tray.

Snug. Oho, this I suppose is Mr.—

Tom. Thomas, sir, at your service.

Snug. Aye, aye, well, Thomas, put it down there, and now, my friend (*to Touchwood.*) you'll take a glass of wine to begin with.

Touch. (*Startled.*) Me—sir—yes—just as you please.

Snug. Aye, to be sure! there, young man, pour you out a glass of wine, and hand it to this gentleman.

Tom. Yes, sir, that I will.

Snug. (*To Touchwood.*) And, by and bye, we'll all meet together at dinner time, and be as cosy and comfortable—

[Exit, R. H.]

Touch. Comfortable, indeed! much chance I have of that. It is positively as if every single thing occurred in order to increase my fears and perplexities. This morning, on venturing near Sally's dwelling, just to ascertain how things were, what was my horror to see the house shant up, as though death were in it, and before I had recovered that shock, who should I see glaring upon me, from the opposite side of the way, but my evil genius of last night. I thought I should have sunk into the pavement. However, I verily believe I made but three steps of it, from there here—and now I do hope and trust we have parted for ever (*Tom, who has slowly and awkwardly poured out the*

wine, puts it at length on the tray, and brings it forward in a timid way. At this time, he has just extended it before Touchwood, whom, however, he does not see, and who does not see him.) Oh, the wine! (Takes it.) Well, here's that we may never meet again! (Drinks.) Gad the very sentiment gives it a relish,—there!

(Holds out the glass, to put it down, and, as he turns his head, Tom puts his forward, and their eyes meet. Touchwood drops the glass, and they look at each other for some time:—the one in affrighted astonishment, the other with a sort of vacant good nature; at length Tom nods to him.)

Touch. Speak, what means that nod?

Tom. It means—how are you by this time?

Touch. Anything else?

Tom. Yes, I hope as you're pretty well?

Touch. Psha!

Tom. Pray, may I inquire, in my turn, what's the meaning of psha?

Touch. Begone! I am in no state to be trifled with.

Tom. And who said you were?

Touch. Fellow—my friend, I would say, you see before you a man robbed—

Tom. (Quickly.) Not by me.

Touch. No, by Fate.

Tom. Ah, I know nothing about him. I only know that what you gave me was of your own free will, and that I'll be on my oath of—

Touch. It is not of money that I speak, it is of my natural rest that I am deprived. My sleep, my precious sleep, I have not had a wink.

Tom. Yes, you have, for I tipped you one this blessed morning. Don't you remember, there, at the corner of what is it street? I did so to you (Winking.) You made believe not to see me, but, Lord love you, I'm rather too knowing a one to be done that way—though you did somehow or other contrive to give me the slip last night. However, as to our being for the future on speaking terms, it's just as you like about that, you know; I don't want to say nothing, but still, after what I saw last night—

Touch. Hush, my good friend! don't speak of that here.

Tom. And why not? I've nothing to be afraid of.

Touch. No, but with regard to me—

Tom. Oh, with regard to you, that's a very different affair.

Touch. Yes, yes, but still be assured that, in what you thought you saw, you were deceived—

Tom. Was I. Now I say you are much more deceived if you think to gammon me that way. What I saw, I saw, and to that I'll bear witness.

Touch. No, no! Hush; (Aside.) Bear witness!—those words give me a death chill. (Aloud.) You know not how you distress me.

Tom. But I don't want to distress you, what should I get by that?

Touch. (Eagerly.) Nothing, certainly; while, by an opposite course, you may gain your utmost wishes (in a low voice), you have already had money of me.

Tom. Well, I don't deny about that.

Touch. Listen; with an allowance of ten pounds a year make you comfortable?

Tom. Why, yes, I should say it would go a good

way towards it, certainly, but with regard to last night—

Touch. Hush! not a word of that! and see here, here is the amount of the first year.

(Gives money.)

Tom. You don't mean it? Ten pounds a year, besides what you have already given me! I tell you what, the next time you have a fancy for walking by the river at night—

Touch. Silence, I entreat you.

Tom. Oh, I'm not going to blab, only if those wicked notions should get hold of you again—

Touch. Never, never!

Tom. Ah, that's all stuff, because, when one once can bring one's self to do such a thing, there is no reason as I see why one shouldn't take the fit to do it half-a-score times—

Touch. (Aside.) Confound the fellow! does he think I push people into the river by the dozen! (Aloud.) My friend, it never did, and never can occur again. Oh, dear! oh, dear!

Tom. Well, well, enough said; and now, as you do look what I call rather done for, suppose you were to take another glass of wine and a morsel of somewhat to eat.

Touch. No, no! I am in no state to eat.

Tom. An't you? Well, then, there's a precious wide difference between you and me, for I never had such a jolly good appetite. Gad, I could eat the hind leg of a donkey, and I've a famous mind to— (Approaching the table.)

Touch. To what? you wouldn't think of touching anything on that table.

Tom. Oh, well, just as you please. I know what to do. (Going.)

Touch. (Aside.) Now he's offended again. I daren't do it.—Stay a moment, my good friend! you may take anything you like.

Tom. No, may I though? Well, come, that is monstrous kind. (Aside.) I declare I'm half abashed, but I mustn't affront such a very good friend as he seems inclined to be to me, and so here goes. (Sits down to the table and eats.) But, I say, why won't you pick a bit along wi' me? you may as well.

Touch. I tell you, friend, it cannot be. (Aside.) I must let him do as he will, but I trust no one will come in and see him.

Tom. Well, I'm sorry as you won't, for I do really believe, when all's said and done, that you are a good-natured chap enough.

Touch. Thank you!

Tom. And, if you come to that, so am I; or else, I say, old fellow, where would you be now?

Touch. Hush, no more of that! take a glass of wine.

Tom. With the greatest of pleasures! (Pours out.) You won't hob and nob? Never mind, here's towards your good health! (Drinks.) Well, if this an't the best day's journey work I've done a long time, why, jigger my jumps, that's all.

Touch. Confound his vulgarity! Not yet done, and some one is coming.

Enter SNUGGLE, L. H.

Tom. (Not seeing him.) Why, I say! (holding up a large piece of meat) what do they call this here? (Seeing Snuggle.) Ahem!

(Endeavours to hide it.)

Snug. Well, I hope that gentleman finds himself cosy and comfortable.

Tom. My eye, here'll be a shindy!

Snug. Mr. Touchwood! (*Touchwood turns away.*) And you, sir, (*To Tom.*) How dare you take such a liberty?

Tom. I took no liberty, I took nothing but one or two slices of ham, and Mr. What-d'ye-call-'em, there, told me to do it, and let him deny it if he likes.

Touch. (*Aside.*) Not for the world.

Snug. Pray, sir, do you usually allow people of this sort to sit down and eat in your presence.

Touch. Sir, the fact is—I say, sir, the fact is—I dare say all this appears very strange to you.

Snug. It does, indeed, sir.

Touch. Well, sir, I don't dispute that point with you, but, as I was saying, the fact is, sir, that there are reasons—

Tom. Yes, sir, that's it, there are reasons, sir, and Mr. Thingummy knows there are.

Touch. (*Roughly.*) Silence!

Tom. Hey?

Touch. (*Very softly.*) I merely say—allow me to explain the matter.

Tom. Oh!

Snug. Come, come, sir, we had better leave him thing to explain itself, I believe.

Tom. Yes, may be that will be the best after all.

Touch. Thus much only allow me to say, that in consequence of something to which I will not now more particularly allude—

Tom. No, no (*significantly*), better not, you know.

Touch. I ain't going. I repeat that, owing to what I call a very great service rendered to me by this person, I feel myself called upon to allow him—

Tom. Ten pounds a year, bless you! I'm not ashamed to own it.

Snug. Well, sir, I have no wish to pry into this or any other private affair of yours, and if your friend will only—now that he has done—just clear away his own table, why, there's an end to the matter.

Tom. Oh, to be sure, I'll toddle off with it, and that in less than no time. (*Aside to Touchwood.*) Don't you fret yourself—it's all right.

[*Exit, 2 E. R. H.*]

Snug. And now, perhaps, you'll have no objection to a walk about the grounds of my Rus in Urbe, as I call it, with me and my daughter.

Touch. Sir, you may take me where you will. (*Aside.*) If I can only, by that means, escape the persecution of my evil genius.

Snug. Come, follow me, then, and I'll take you first round by the river.

[*Exit, R. H.*]

Touch. The river again? If I were up to my neck in it, I couldn't be much worse off than I am.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Garden of Snuggle's House, with part of the building at the side. At the back, the river, &c. The sun is just setting, and, during the scene, the stage becomes gradually darker.*

Enter, from the house, SALLY, followed by TOM TILLER.

Tom. Ha, ha! well, to be sure, only to think of our meeting here in this way, and unbeknown to each other.

Sally. (*Aside.*) Why, not quite, but no matter for that now—but just tell me how you came so very intimate with Mr. Charles.

Tom. Oh, bless you, I'm by no manner of means what you calls regularly intimate, I'm only a little familiar or so with him, on account of his having known me a long time as a body may call it, professionally; but, law bless me, they say there's a tide in the affairs of men, and I am sure there is in the affairs of watermen, and one that has been running down a long time; for, what with bridges, and omnibuses, and steam-boats, why what is there left for an honest pair of sculls to do? Nobody ever calls a boat in these days, except it may be now and then a gentleman as wants to drown himself, and few of them has the gentility to pay their fare beforehand, so that you see, Sally, we're obligated for to do many things as we warn't larned to do in our apprenticeship, and like amphibious animals, to get our living on land, as well as water.

Sally. Well, that's all satisfactory, as far as you're concerned, and now let you and I see if we can't do something to help my friend, Miss Lydia, and your friend, Mr. Charles, out of their present quandary (*aside*), and to pay off Mr. Touchwood the grudge I owe him, for serving me as he has done. (*Aloud.*) There they go, the nice young creatures, looking as innocent as two lambs, going to be sacrificed at the altar of ambition.

Tom. Well, I say, Mrs. Sally, you're a going it with your hard words, however; I'm sure I, for one, can't think. (*Reflecting.*)

Sally. No, Thomas, you seldom can—but stay! (*Laying her hand smartly on the top of Tom's head.*) I think I've hit on something.

Tom. Gad you have, you have hit me on my head, and devilish hard, too.

Sally. It may do, but we must, above all, take care that we are not seen together, and if anything strikes you—

Tom. But I hope nothing will; I have had enough for one while, though for fear I shouldn't, here comes that plague of my life, Mother Crab.

Sally. So she does—yes, there she is, I declare, and come to look after you, Tom, swelling like a turkey cock.

Enter MRS. CRAB.

Mrs. C. Well, upon my word! I thought, ma'am, as you was here to lend a helping hand.

Sally. So I am, and so, perhaps, you'll be good enough to tell me which hand it's to be?

Tom. Ha! ha! there she has you, I think.

Mrs. C. I don't descend to answer such low breeding, but, as for you, Mr. Thomas, I've been wanting you for some time—

Sally. Yes, ma'am, he knows you have, and I know it, too, and we also both of us know as you're anything but likely to get him.

Tom. Ha, ha! and there she certainly has you again.

Mrs. C. Sho have me?

Sally. Yes, you wanted one of us to have you, may be it don't signify which.

(*Tom and Sally laugh.*)

Mrs. C. Ignorant being! I wonder, Mr. Thomas, how a person of your sense could ever take up with such as sho?

Tom. Now, Mrs. Crab, I don't want to be no way rude to you, because I ain't going to deny that you have been all day long a putting, or a pouring, something or other precious nice down my throat, but still, you know, as a man of honour, and, I may

say, a gentleman, I can't stand by and hear her abused as is about to become my lawful spouse.

Mrs. C. But she's not about to become no such a thing, for, if I can't have my own way, I think I know how to spoil her sport, and that's some comfort.

Sally. But don't, pray don't, my dear Mrs. Crab, because when our wedding takes place, we'll not forget to ask you, and we'll all sit down and be happy.

Mrs. C. Indeed! we'll do great things, seemingly, but take care as I don't put a spoke in your wheel.

Tom. Don't you wish you may be able?

Mrs. C. Yes, and what's more, since you provoke me, you shall find that I am able. *(Tom and Sally laugh.)* Very fine, ma'am, you're quite in the right to laugh while you can, but when Mr. Thomas throws you off, as he most certainly will, you'll find it no such laughing matter, because you can't go back again to your former admirer, Mr. Touchwood, as you have been so long carrying on your game with in secret, because he has now done with all such trumpery as you *(Tom, who has gone on laughing, at the beginning of this speech, changes, by degrees, into a melancholy tone)*; and now you may grin at that; but mind you one thing, Mr. Tiller, don't you go for to presume to put your ugly face into my kitchen again, for, as sure as ever you do, I'll give you a crack of the head with my rolling-pin, as shall make you think all London is illuminated.

[Exit.

Tom. Sally!

Sally. Thomas.

Tom. Mrs. Sally, I say.

Sally. And Mr. Thomas, I say.

Tom. Come, ma'am, this won't do, you may give yourself what airs you please, there's a something or another behind all, which behoves me to have cleared up, and I think it's time that I plucked up a spirit, and speak out to you.

Sally. And now you have spoken out, what do you mean to do next?

Touch. *(Without.)* Lydia, Miss Lydia, I say!

Tom. There, ma'am is your answer.

Sally. What do you mean?

Tom. I mean that I've a word or two to say to Mr. Touchwood in private, so you get out of the way.

Sally. In private? but supposing—

Tom. Supposing you do for once as you're desired.

Sally. Well, I'm gone *(aside)*; but I'll not go far, though.

[Exit.

Tom. I don't quite understand the rights of this affair between Mrs. Sally and him, so I'll just have it out with the gentleman at once.

(Stands aside.)

Enter, from the house, TOUCHWOOD, somewhat elated by wine.

Touch. Miss Lydia, charming Miss Lydia! not here neither. I reckon it particularly unkind in her now to take herself off in that unceremonious way, just as I had, somehow or other, got the courage to speak up to her like a man; however, there's one thing I'm determined on for the future, I'll speak to her and to everybody else like a man, and not suffer myself to be threatened and bullied as I have been, especially by that imp of destruc-

tion, that dwarf, that pigmy, that hop-o'-my-thumb— *(Tom, who has gradually come forward, stands before him.)—(Aside.)* Oh, Lord! talk of the— *(Smiling.)* How d'ye do, Mr. Tiller?

Tom. Pretty well, I thank you, Mr. Touchwood.

Touch. I was just thinking of you, and, therefore, I consider—I say, Mr. T.—I consider your coming as a particularly lucky accident.

Tom. Do you? but, you see, my coming here don't happen to be an accident at all.

Touch. Indeed, then all one can say upon that is that it's the more particularly kind in you.

Tom. I'm glad you think so; and now, if you'll just give me a bit of your attention, I shall take it as particularly kind of you.

Touch. *(Aside.)* I don't like his manner! what can he mean? *(Aloud.)* Certainly, Mr. T.—I say, most certainly.

Tom. Very good, then; in the first place, there is a young person in this house, a young female I'll say, that you, it seems, have been some time trying to be on good terms with.

Touch. To whom do you allude, Mr. T.?

Tom. Oh, come, you know well enough; there's no vast occasion to name names, but this much I'll say—it begins with a crooked letter.

Touch. A crooked letter?

Tom. Ay, an S. Now are you awake?

Touch. *(Aside.)* S, why, he means Miss Snuggle. There is no other. *(Aside.)* Yes, Mr. T., I am awake, and, although I certainly have my views in that quarter, yet I don't see how that can concern you.

Tom. Don't you? *(Aside.)* Then he don't know of Sally and I keeping company—come that's something. *(Aloud.)* Why, I don't know that it argifies much about what you see, because I see, and I say, that I don't choose you to have anything more to say to her.

Touch. Well, I like the notion of that, I must say. You don't choose it?

Tom. No, I don't, and that because I have taken a fancy to her myself.

Touch. You! upon my word you are a very pleasant sort of person; it's only a pity that there is so little of you.

Tom. Come, I say!

Touch. Oh, well, if it offends you, I won't say another word—only the idea you know of one so much above you.

Tom. Above me! suppose she is, all that she's got to do is to stoop down. I should think that's rather more to your business than yours.

Touch. Well, but will she condescend to have you because you have taken a fancy to her?

Tom. She will, because she's taken ditto to me, if you doubt it, ask her, that's all.

Touch. *(Aside.)* Well, I never—Lydia take a fancy, as he calls it, to him? it can't be, and yet I must say she has been particularly cool to me; and, down at Margate, more than once talked about her affections being engaged. Oh, these women! they do take such vagaries into their heads! *(Aloud.)* And her father—

Tom. What, her old dad! he and I shook hands upon it a long while ago.

Touch. Poo! Poo!

Enter SALLY.

Tom. *(Advancing to him.)* What do you mean by "Poo! Poo!" I tell you what, you just from this

individual moment give up all thought of the person in question, or I'll ring such a peal in your ears as shall make you think the very dead are come to life.

Touch. The dead! (*At that moment his eyes rest on Sally, who, dressed in white, appears beckoning to try to entice away Tom without being seen.*) Ah, help! murder! ghosts!

(*Sinks on a bank.*)

Sally. (*Coming forward and taking hold of Tom.*) Come this way, do!

Tom. Hullo! I say, don't you—what are you at?

Sally. Come along, and don't be a fool, I tell you!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter from the house, SNUGGLE.

Snug. What is all this noise? Ah, Mr. Touchwood! (*Shaking him.*) Hullo, friend Touchwood.

Touch. Leave me! leave me!

Snug. Leave you? not I—what's the matter?

Touch. (*Recovering.*) Is she gone?

Snug. She! who? (*Aside.*) Oh, he means my daughter. (*Aloud.*) She is for the moment, but she is coming again.

Touch. Coming again, is she? then let me go.

Snug. And why, pray?

Touch. Because—yet, as you say—why should I? the whole world in league together can't make that true which is in itself false!

Snug. I don't see who is to deny that.

Touch. Very well, then, after all, what have I to fear? supposing a dozen rascally watermen should swear it—

Snug. (*Impatiently.*) Swear it! swear what?

Touch. Why, that I pushed her into the river.

Snug. The river! Where? when?

Touch. Why, last night.

Snug. Oh!

Touch. When she knows perfectly well that she jumped in of her own accord—and, therefore, I am determined to give myself no more concern about it. I will not be put upon in this way, by every fool, and from this very moment I shall make myself as happy and as independent as a gentleman of eight hundred a-year ought to be, and so they shall find.

Snug. (*Aside.*) Oh, I begin to suspect, (*looking at him*) yes, it's clear he has taken too much wine while I was asleep. I'd better get him quietly to bed. (*Aloud.*) My friend, I should be sorry that my daughter saw you just now, it might injure you in her opinion.

Touch. Sir, the opinion of your daughter, and your daughter herself, are alike objects of the most perfect indifference to me.

Snug. (*Aside.*) Oh, he's very tipsy indeed. (*Aloud.*) Come, come!

Touch. I will not come come, and what's more, sir, I will not marry any young woman who has already cast her affections upon another.

Snug. (*Laughing.*) Oh, is that all?

Touch. What do you know of that little affair, then?

Snug. (*Aside.*) He has discovered her attachment to her cousin, and that has given him this annoyance. (*Aloud.*) Yes, yes, I know all about it, but I'll now put an end to it.

Touch. I beg you'll do no such thing, on my account, for I, sir, have done with her, and you

too, and now you may marry her, sir, as soon as you like, to her jolly young waterman, ha! ha!

Snug. I tell you what, sir, I can put up with a good deal, but don't you carry this joke too far—don't, I say, put me into a passion—that is not at all what I call cosy and comfortable; zounds! and fury—I'm getting into such a rage, I don't know that I shall ever be cool again.

Touch. Oh, if you want to get cool, the best thing in the world is to take a little turn on the river—there's your son-in-law, you know, the very person to do that for you! it's all in his line. (*Imitating the waterman.*) "Boat, your honour? oars? sculls? capital tide up!" Ha! ha!

Snug. (*Aside.*) Why, he's as drunk as he can be. (*Aloud.*) Here, Charles, nephew, Thomas,—I say, I'll have you carried off to bed at once.

Touch. Not you, indeed, old Wigshy. (*He runs towards the side, Snuggle pursuing him—just as he is going off, Enter CHARLES and LYDIA, meeting him.*) Confound it, is there no escape?

Char. (*To Snuggle.*) Now, sir.

Snug. Charles, do you wish to be my son-in-law?—don't answer me, but knock that impudent rascal down, and you shall marry Lyddy to-morrow.

Char. Say not another word, sir.

(*Running towards Touchwood. Touchwood running away, tries to escape by the back.*)

Enter TOM TILLER, L. H.

Tom. What's the row?

Touch. Ho hero!—but I don't care; I'll be neither bullied nor robbed any more, and with regard to last night, I neither did, nor meant to do harm to any mortal being, and that I'll swear, as I'm alive.

Enter SALLY, L. H.

Sally. Do, and as I'm alive, I'll confirm it.

Touch. Sally—and living! Oh, here has been a pretty conspiracy, and you, sir (*to Tiller*), are at the bottom of it.

Tom. I say, my fine fellow, if you happen to have more teeth in your head than you know what to do with, you'd just better say that again.

Touch. Oh, don't think to frighten me—now she's there, it won't do, you know.

Sally. (*Interposing.*) Pray don't let there be no violence on either side. There has been a great deal of mistake here, and poor Mr. Touchwood has been the chief sufferer.

Touch. I have, indeed; and I thank you particularly for your share of what I've had.

Tom. Come, I say, Mr. Thingummy!

Sally. Now, Thomas, keep you quiet.

Touch. No, no, pray let him talk; but I'll promise him he gets no more Hush Money out of me.

All. (*With loud voices.*) Hush Money?

Touch. Yes, Hush Money it was intended for, but it don't seem to have had the effect with any of you.

Snug. I tell you what—there certainly has, as Sally says, been some mistake.

Sally. There has been one which she alone can thoroughly explain, and she will do so later, if you'll now only take her word for the fact, and be friends, one and all, as you ought to be—what say you, young folks?

Char. and Lyd. Agreed.

Sally. (*To Snuggle.*) And you, sir?

Snug. I say, let's be cosy and comfortable.

Sally (To Tom.) And you?

Tom. I agree with my wife—as is to be—as every other gentleman does—*(Aside.)*—till she is my wife.

Sally. (To Touchwood.) And you?

Touch. Anything for a quiet life.

Sally. Then all are agreed.

Touch. Except those whose voice is of more importance than all the rest. *(To the Audience.)* I have been, for the last hour, labouring under a very serious imputation, and it seems expected by some that my conduct should be thoroughly explained. Ladies and gentlemen! I say, once for all, I won't do it—I will not, positively. Drown a woman, indeed!—a likely story. The object of

my life is to drown your cares, and should I effect that by drowning woman—woman, the destroyer of care? No, no, you have been witnesses—partial ones, I hope—to what I have really done, and therefore let me only obtain your approval of it, and under that sanction, ladies and gentlemen, I don't care what they say; I'll do the very same thing again to-morrow.

Disposition of the character at the fall of the Curtain.

SALLY. TOUCHWOOD.

TILLER.

LYDIA.

SNUGGLE.

CHARLES.

R.

L.

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